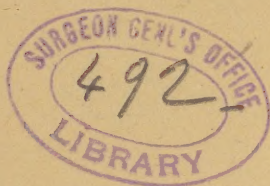


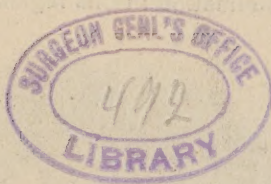
de Schweinitz (G. E.)

*Symblepharon as a sequel
of purulent ophthalmia -*



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SYMBLEPHARON AS A SEQUEL OF PURULENT OPHTHALMIA.

THE following somewhat unusual complication in purulent ophthalmia occurred in a case which was admitted to my wards in the Philadelphia Hospital about one year ago.

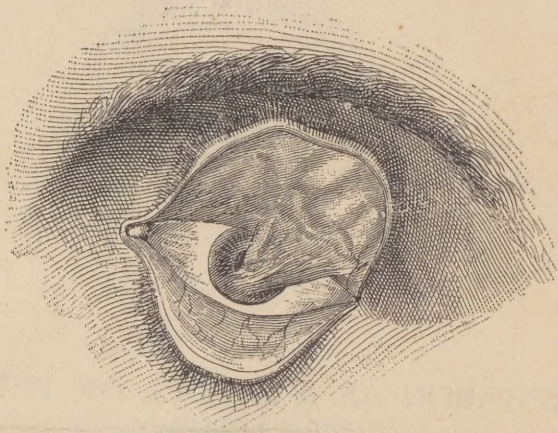
A boy, aged seven, was brought to the wards at the height of an attack of purulent ophthalmia. The upper lid was cedematous, overhanging the lower, and its conjunctiva was hypertrophied throughout its entire papillary layer, was succulent, bleeding easily, and secreting profuse amounts of purulent matter. No membrane covered its surface. The ocular conjunctiva was infiltrated and surrounded the cornea in a hard ring. The cornea itself was intact except for two ulcerated spots, one below and to the outer side of the pupil, the other above and to the nasal side. Both of these areas were shallow excavations surrounded by grayish infiltration.

The treatment of the case consisted in that ordinarily employed in similar cases of purulent ophthalmia, namely, hourly cleansing with bichloride of mercury solution (1-8000) atropine drops, hot compresses, and the daily application to the tarsal conjunctiva of a solution of nitrate of silver varying, according to circumstances, from 10 to 30 grains to the ounce. Under this treatment the condition slowly subsided, but it was noted that the conjunctiva of the upper lid had become fastened to the ulcers of the cornea. Many attempts were made to prevent this union, but without success, and it was finally disregarded until healing had taken place, and then corrected by a subsequent operation. The accompanying cut illustrates the formation of the symblepharon.

The result of the operation, which consisted in dissecting off the adhesion and covering in the exposed conjunctiva by sliding a flap into place, was entirely successful. There is sufficient clear cornea between the scars resulting from the two ulcers to permit of a small iridectomy for optical purposes.

2 SYMBLEPHARON A SEQUEL OF PURULENT OPHTHALMIA.

The formation of symblepharon as the result of purulent ophthalmia has been occasionally mentioned, especially by the older writers, but its occurrence must be rare. It is well known, that symblepharon may follow diphtheria of the conjunctiva, and it is possible in the present instance that the ulcer of the cornea may have been of the diphtheritic type. There was nothing, however, in its external appearance to differentiate it from any similar loss of substance which is ordinarily seen in aggravated cases of purulent ophthalmia, nor was there any membrane or any characteristic hardness on or of the lid to show a diphtheritic form of inflammation in this region. The case is somewhat analo-



gous to those instances of pterygium which have been reported as a sequel of purulent ophthalmia. Thus, Knapp (*Archives of Ophthalmology and Otology*, Vol. II) has seen a superior pterygium appear in the eye of an eleven year old girl, who was one of a number in a Home attacked during an epidemic of purulent ophthalmia. He operated successfully upon this case. These pterygia, however, have the ordinary appearance of similar growths in the usual situation over the internal rectus, and are not, as was the case just recorded, a bond of union between the under surface of the upper lid and the margin of the cornea.

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